

# Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: July 13-14, 2005

Reference No.: 2.2b.(2)  
Action Item

From: CINDY McKIM  
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Jay Norvell  
Division Chief  
Environmental Analysis

Ref: **SUMMARY – DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, STATE ROUTE 152 IN  
MERCED COUNTY – CONSTRUCT BYPASS NEAR LOS BANOS**

## **ISSUE:**

The California Transportation Commission (Commission) is being asked to review and comment at the July 2005 Commission meeting on the following Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR):

- 10-Mer-152, KP 25.8/39.9 (PM 16.0/24.8). Construct bypass near Los Banos in Merced County.

## **PROGRAMMING:**

This project is not fully funded. This project is programmed in the 2004 State Transportation Improvement Program for \$2,000,000 in Regional Improvement Program funds and \$2,000,000 in Interregional Improvement Program funds for the Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED) phase. The total estimated project cost is \$324,653,000. The project is scheduled to begin construction in Fiscal Year 2012.

## **ALTERNATIVES BEING CONSIDERED:**

- Alternative 1M – Construct bypass south of Los Banos, parallel to and approximately 1700 feet from Copa de Ora Avenue.
- Alternative 2M – Construct bypass south of Los Banos, parallel to and approximately 3700 feet from Copa de Ora Avenue.
- Alternative 3M – Construct bypass north of Los Banos.
- No-Build Alternative.

**POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:**

- Loss of farmland – approximately 537 to 691 acres.
- Loss of habitat for sensitive wildlife species – approximately 400 to 525 acres.
- Loss of wetland areas – up to approximately 2.9 acres.
- Increased noise – no abatement proposed.
- Relocations – 17 to 37 residential relocations, one to four business relocations (including at least one dairy).

Because the project will require substantial new right-of-way with relocations; require substantial changes to the layout or function of connecting roadways; have a significant adverse effect on abutting real property (primarily farmland); and have other potentially significant effects, including unmitigated impacts; an Environmental Impact Report with a Statement of Overriding Considerations is being prepared.

**PROPOSED MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM:**

- Possible conservation easements to protect farmland.
- Mitigation for habitat loss, in consultation with resource agencies.
- Construction of retaining wall to minimize wetland impacts.
- Provide relocation advisory assistance.

Attachment

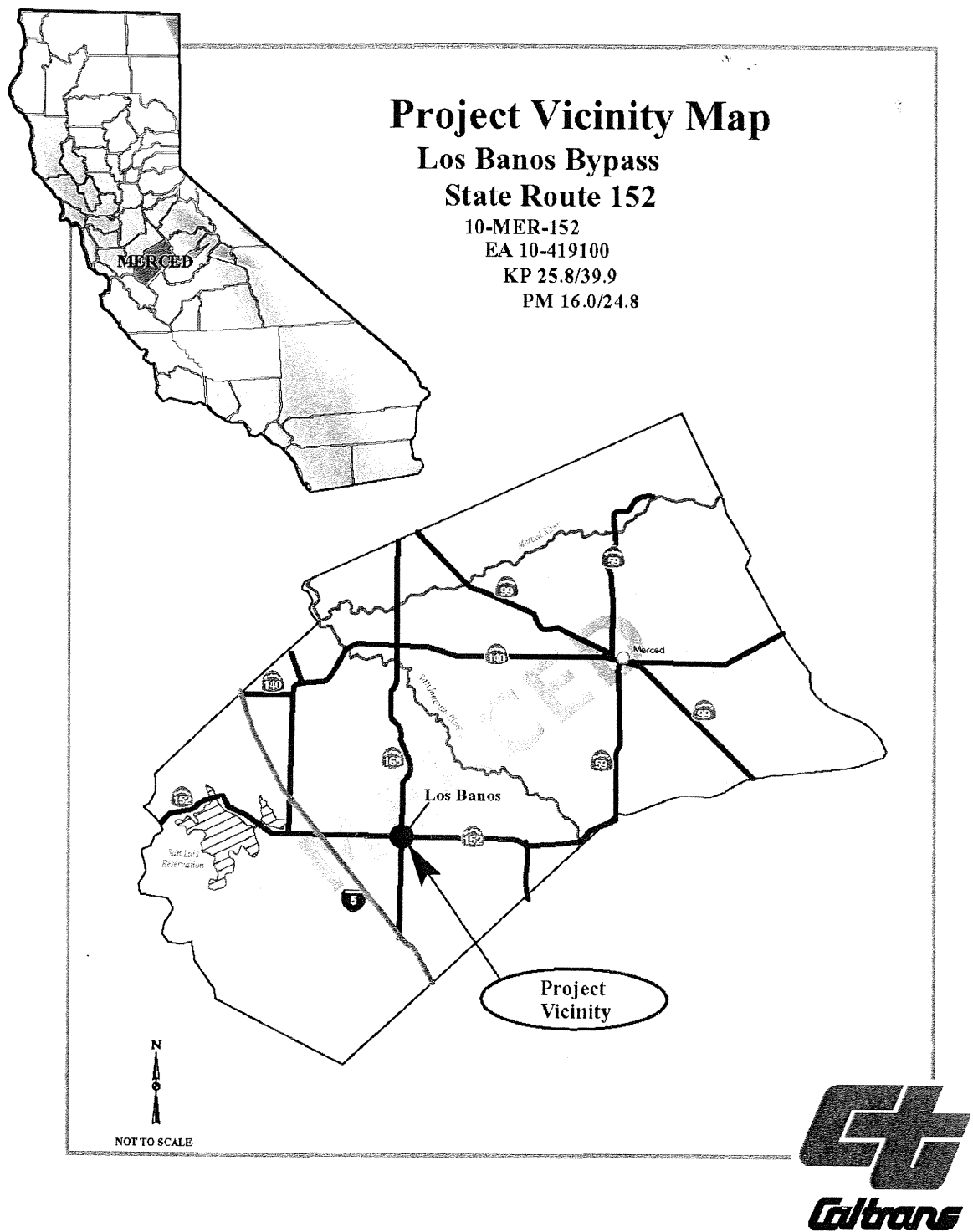


Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map